CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY	USSR	REPORT	25X1
SUBJECT	Gold Mines under the Indigirka and Tenkin Directorates of Dalstroy	DATE DISTR.	MAY 27 1955
		NO. OF PAGES	8
DATE OF INFO.		REQUIREMENT	25X1
PLACE ACQUIRED		REFERENCES	25X1
DATE ACQUIRED	This is UNEVALUATED Information		

SOURCE EVALUATIONS ARE DEFINITIVE. APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.

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Organization

1. The headquarters of the Indigirka Gold Mining Directorate was in Ust Nera, which is located at the confluence of the Nera and Indigirka Rivers, approximately N 64-34, E 143-13 . The directorate controlled all gold mines, a total of 17, on both sides of the Indigirka River and within a radius of approximately 200 km from Ust Nera. The eastern limit was at Azerka, the northern limit at Tebelyakk (N 65-15, E 143-10), the southern limit at Bogatyr, and the northwestern near the Inyali River.[1]

2. Following are the names and approximate number of workers in some of the mines under the directorate:[1]

Priisk Pobeda (N 64-28, E 144-55):	5,500 workers
Priisk Indigirskiy (N 64-38, E 144-27):	2,500 workers
Priisk Ualchan:	5,000 workers
Priisk Marshanskiy (Marshalskiy: N 64-58, E 142-03):	4,000 workers
Priisk Partizan:	2,500 workers
Priisk Bogatyr:	3,000 workers; near Omyakon
Priisk Pokrishkin:	1,600 workers, very good ore, two mine elevators.

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STATE	X	ARMY	X	NAVY	X	AIR	X	FBI		AEC		ORREV	X		

(Note: Washington distribution indicated by "X"; Field distribution by "#".)

Priisk Novopanfilov:	1,500 workers
Priisk Khatanakh:	1,500 workers
Priisk Krasno-Oktyabrskiy:	1,500 workers
Priisk Yebileynyy:	1,500 workers
Priisk Tirekhtyakh (N 64-50, E 143-28):	800 workers
Priisk Kinersola:	1,400 workers
Priisk Sokha:	7,000 to 8,000 workers

Priisk Inyali:

3. The Tenkin Gold Mining Directorate controlled 13 to 14 mines. Following are the names of some of the mines:

Timoshenko
Voroshilov
Budennyy
Gartela
Gvardeytsa
Maksim Gorkiy
Chekalo
Lenin

4. Each gold mine had a central adminstration (OLP) and five to seven camps, which were called sections (uchastok) and had individual names.[2] The various gold mines were exploited both in placers (otkrytyy poligon /sig/) and in veins. Usually, one section specialized in placers and the others in mines.

Working of Placers and Mines

5. A placer (poligon), covering an area approximately 50 x 200 m, was usually established on both sides of a small river bed. Workers, armed with crowbars, would dig holes, about 50 cm deep, every 1.50 m. It took about four hours to dig such a hole. Dynamite or ammonal sticks were then placed in the holes and the whole area blown up at once. The ore was taken to a dump (otval) in wheelbarrows and left there for washing. The norm was a one-meter hole per day per man. The operation was difficult, because the ground is permanently frozen in that area to a depth of eight m. In summer, it thaws only to a depth of about 15 to 20 cm.

6. Work in the mines was carried on summer and winter and was relatively elementary. Mine shafts were driven either horizontally into the mountain side or vertically into the ground. Vertical mines were usually about 20 to 40 m deep and 100 m long and had one main shaft leading to the mine pit. A bucket served to transport workers and ore from the pit. An engineer determined the places to be bored at the working face. After the boring, dynamite was used to blast the surface. Mine ventilators were run for an hour or 70 minutes after the explosion. When the gases had cleared, the loose soil was loaded into wheelbarrows and rolled on boards toward the mine pit. The ore was then taken to the surface and sent to the dump in mine cars. Props were used to support the mine walls. At one time, 30 men were killed by a collapse in the mine.

7. After the blasting, the brigade leader examined the loosened ore and called for the necessary number of workers, usually about 17. Seven workers loaded the wheelbarrows, eight pushed them to the pit, and two broke up the large rocks. The norm at some 50 m from the hoist was the same in all mines. Each man had to load 80 to 100 wheelbarrows with a capacity of about one cubic meter, per 11-hour shift.

8. Gold washing operations were carried on in ore washing machines for two to two and a half months in summer. After the water froze in the washing machines, ore was washed in pans (latka) for about one month more, using warm water supplied by boilers.

Equipment

9. There were three devices for washing the ore, as follows:

a. Pans: For testing the gold content of the ore and for washing the ore for about one month after the water began to freeze in the other washing installations. The pans were also used for secondary washing, after the ore had gone through the temporary ore washing machines.

b. Temporary ore washing machine (see sketch on page 7): Primarily of wood construction and could be erected in two or three days. The installation was usually broken up when work in an area had been completed. It was set up between two placers and at a distance of no more than 200 m from the mines. The ore was carted from the dump in wheelbarrows, over an incline of boards, to a bunker at one end of the washing machine. The ore dropped from the bunker into a small mining car on rails, which was pulled by an electric windlass (lebedka) to a second bunker. This bunker held ten to seventeen wheelbarrow loads. Here, water was added to the ore, and four men stirred the mixture for about ten minutes, with a hook (pribatorka [sic] or skrebok) which was sharp at one end and dull at the other. Then, the bottom of the bunker was opened, and the mixture ran over some drainage tables (kolodets), which had a series of screens or sieves (resheto). Under the tables, there were bags of cloth which caught the drained mixture. When each bag was full, it was picked up and the contents washed in a pan. The total labor force on such a device was about 40 men. The installation could be loaded six or seven times per hour, depending on the quality of the ore. Since the bunker and mining car held 10 to 17 wheelbarrow loads, each containing one cubic meter of ore, each operation processed approximately 10 to 17 cubic meters of ore Because of delays of various kinds, the quantity of ore washed per 12-hour shift was approximately 150 cubic meters. The amount of gold obtained was approximately six to eight kg.

c. Scrubber (see sketch on page 8): A mechanized version of the temporary washing device. The ore was placed in a loading tank at the lower end of the device; when available, bulldozers were used for that purpose. A continuous conveyor belt, equipped with scoops and operated by an electric motor, carried the ore from the tank to the scrubber. One worker controlled the flow of ore from the tank. A second man regulated the intake at the scrubber. A third man checked on the electric water pump. The water and ore mixture came out of the scrubber and flowed over the drainage tables, which were watched over by a fourth man. Three other workers brought the ore to the device. It took ten men three or four weeks to assemble a scrubber. When the work was completed, the scrubbers were moved in parts to new locations. The scrubber was composed of two metal parts, the main body and a screen. It washed approximately 200 cubic meters of ore per 12-hour shift. The average yield of gold from 200 cubic meters of ore was eight to nine kg, but occasionally it would be as high as 26 kg.

10. The smaller gold mines had 33 to 35 ore washing devices each, and the larger mines had approximately 45. There were no scrubbers in the Tenkin Directorate in 1945. In other mines, there was an equal number of temporary washers and scrubbers and more scrubbers in the newer mines, particularly after 1949.

11. The equipment in the mines improved after 1947 or 1948. In the Tenkin Directorate, all work was done by hand and shovel in 1945. After 1948, the smaller mines had one excavator for working the placers, and the larger ones had two. Small excavators, called "Marion" (sic), were also used. Scrubbers were slowly replacing the more primitive gold washing devices. After 1948, all the mines [redacted] had electric current, which seldom failed. 25X1
The Marshanskiy and Ualchan Mines together received 500 kw.

Description of Ore

12. At the Ualchan Mine and some of the other mines, the gold in the placers could

be easily seen as small specks in the earth after a heavy rain. Small nuggets, about half the size of a peanut, were not rare. [redacted] a 25X1
nugget weighing 400 grams in the Marshanskiy Gold Mine. [redacted]
the largest nugget, weighing nine kg, was found by a prisoner in the 25X1
Pokrishkin (Pokriskin) Mine, west of the Indigirka River. [redacted]
[redacted] a small nugget, weighing about 30 to 40 grams, [redacted] found at the 25X1
Pobeda Mine [redacted] The ore contained mostly white gold 25X1
(rizhiy) and little red gold and no other minerals. The red gold was better, and a piece of the size of an apple weighed approximately four kg; a comparable nugget of white gold weighed approximately three kg. The quality of the gold was 96 and in Iran it was approximately 40 (sic). Workers were searched with a device similar to a mine detector before being released, to prevent them from taking any gold. When the device came near the gold, it pinged.

Timoshenko Mine

13. The Timoshenko Mine was located south of Neksikan (N 62-40, E 147-40). In 1945, as much as 100 kg of gold was obtained per shift.

Pobeda Mine

14. The Pobeda Mine was located 109 km southeast of Ust Nera and nine km north of Burustakh (N 64-27, E 144-45), near the Nera River. The mine had a headquarters and five or six sections. The workers were all political or criminal prisoners, who worked in separate brigades. Section No. 2 had approximately 800 workers. Most of the prisoners were Russians and Chechen-Ingush; there were also many Balts, two Poles, two Polish, and six Russian Jews. [redacted] All work was done by hand; tractors appeared in 25X1
1949 [redacted] The mine had pneumatic drills and trucks (sic).[3] The ore was processed in ore washing installations; Section No. 2 had six washing installations, and the whole mine had 40. At this mine, one machine yielded eight kg of gold per 12-hour shift.

Indigirskiy Mine

15. The Indigirskiy Mine was located approximately 20 km from Burustakh and 30 km from the Pobeda Mine. There was a mine headquarters and four or five sections, including the following: Irtakh, Panfila, Gavrilka, and Tverda. The mine headquarters, although not a directorate, had some mines similar to the sections, but its main work was lumbering and construction of ore washing devices. The Indigirskiy Mine exploited the gold in placers and horizontal mines. The tunnels were usually 70 to 80 meters long. Work in the placers was done by hand, with crowbars; in the mines, pneumatic drills were used. The ore was loaded in wheelbarrows and pushed over boards toward a mining car which held seven wheelbarrow loads. The car was lifted to the surface by an electric windlass. Approximately 75 carloads or 500 cubic meters of ore were extracted per shift.

Ualchan Mine

16. The Ualchan Mine was located on the west bank of the Indigirka River, about 150 km by road from Ust Nera, between the Ualchan (N 64-55, E 143-20) and Elgi Rivers (N 64-16, E 142-05), which are affluents of the Indigirka. Workers included both criminals and politicals. Approximately 700 were common thieves; the majority were Soviets from various regions, such as Tatars, Uzbeks, Kazakhs, and Ukrainians; there were five or six Volga Germans, one of them an ex-PW, and some Poles [redacted] 25X1

17. The mining camp was divided into seven sections, each with a number and name which corresponded to the particular mine in which the prisoners worked. They were as follows:

Section No. 1: Central divisional headquarters (Tsentralnyy OLP)
Section No. 2: Ituryakh
Section No. 3: Zernisa
Section No. 4: Staryy razvedochnyy rayon (Old Prospecting District)

Section No. 5: Postra; 26 km from Section No. 1
Section No. 6: Nadona (or Nadezhda); seven km below Postra
Section No. 7: Vtoroya Shakhtavaya

18. The ore was obtained from placers and mines. Mechanical borers were used in the mines. The mine had approximately 40 scrubbers and temporary ore washing installations. During the two summer months when these machines were operated, there were daily shipments of gold to Ust Nera. Small canvas bags of gold were placed in chests, which weighed 400 to 500 kg when full. Only one truck a day left the mine [redacted] 25X1
[redacted] The truck was a type of wrecker (avareyka /sic/) and was guarded 25X1
by two armed soldiers. [redacted] 25X1

Partizan Mine

19. The Partizan Mine was located 17 km to the east of the Indigirka River and about 120 km down the river from Ust Nera. There was no road from Ust Nera to the mine. In summer, travel was by cutter on the open river; in winter, trucks were driven on the frozen river. The mining camp had two older zones or sections; a third section was built [redacted] and a fourth was 25X1
under construction [redacted] Each section had 8 to 13 barracks. The 25X1
third zone had a bakery, kitchen, and a large storage depot for food and clothing. The depot was a one-story, wooden construction, about 80 x 10 m. Some prisoners worked in the woods, cutting trees for mine props, construction lumber, and fuel wood.

Marshanskiy Mine

20. The Marshanskiy Mine was located on the Elgi and Tanor Rivers (sic), on the west bank of the Indigirka River. The mine headquarters was about 200 km from Ust Nera and 70 km from where the road divided. The furthest mine was on the Paytakh River (sic). Following are some names and numbers of the sections of the mine:

Section No. 1: Statsionarnyy; had a hospital with some 150 to 200 beds
Section No. 3: Staryy pekarnyy
Section No. 4: Perovalnyy
Section No. 5: Headquarters of the mine
Section : Tanor
Section : Lesnyy
Section : Bolganakh
Section : Kakorin
Lagpunkt-rezhimnaya zona (sic: Camp-severe regime zone?)

21. The mine had 30 to 40 ore washing devices, about six of the scrubber type. Kakorin was the most modern section of this mine. There were two mine elevators in each of its pits, and the section used half of the electric current that came to the mine. When the mine was started, date unknown, approximately 90 to 100 kg of gold were obtained per shift. In 1952 and 1953, approximately 16 to 20 kg were obtained per shift. The garage held two tractors and seven or eight trucks.

22. A secret zone was created in the Marshanskiy Mine, a penal detail (rezhimnaya zona /sic/) [redacted] The brigades consisted of 20 25X1
to 25 men, but each had an escort of ten soldiers.

Inyali Mine

23. The Inyali Gold Mine was on the Inyali River, a western affluent of the Indigirka River, approximately 120 km below Ust Nera. Preparations were made for exploiting the mine in 1952, and it was opened in 1953. There were great hopes that this mine would prove one of the richest in the region. Source heard that 400 grams of gold had been obtained from a single washing in a pan. A commission from Moscow surveyed the mine and stated that it had enough gold to be worked for 28 years. The Inyali River is a glacial torrent

(raspadok /sic/ or klyuch), approximately 400 m long and 1.50 m deep. The gold was found mostly 20 to 30 km from the mouth of the river. It was a difficult mine to work because of the ice which was sometimes eight to ten meters thick. In summer 1952, the mine had four exploratory towers or derricks, one of them in the water.

Prospecting Groups

24. Prospecting groups were of two kinds as follows:

a. Prospecting Section (razvedochnyy otdeleniye): Was attached to each mine and varied in size between 40 and 70 people. Such a group was usually headed by a mining engineer who might be a prisoner. The group looked for gold throughout the entire mine area and assisted in the work inside the individual mines.

b. Prospecting District (razvedochnyy rayon): Directly subordinate to a directorate. Consisted of 400 to 500 free workers, some of them engineers, with approximately 50 horses. These groups lived in separate settlements. In the Indigirka Directorate, there was one prospecting district at Priparozhnyy, on the eastern bank of the Indigirka River, north of Ust Nera, and one at Seylik, south of Ust Nera. There was also a prospecting district in Tompo, on the Tompo River (N 62-29, E 134-55), which was subordinate to the Khandiga Directorate in Yakutsk.

25. No one was permitted to prospect for gold alone, and no mine could be started without clearance from headquarters. A fixed quota of 15 grams of gold per day was established for every free person, including wives of officials and doctors, and had to be delivered daily to the office of the chief of the mine. When people did not have time to collect their quota, they bought it from a worker for 20 to 30 rubles.

1. [redacted] a sketch of the Indigirka region, showing the locations of mines and other places discussed in this report. 25X1

2. [redacted] Comment: [redacted] OLP was described as being comparable to a directorate. The term has usually been applied to camp organization rather than to mining activities. 25X1 25X1

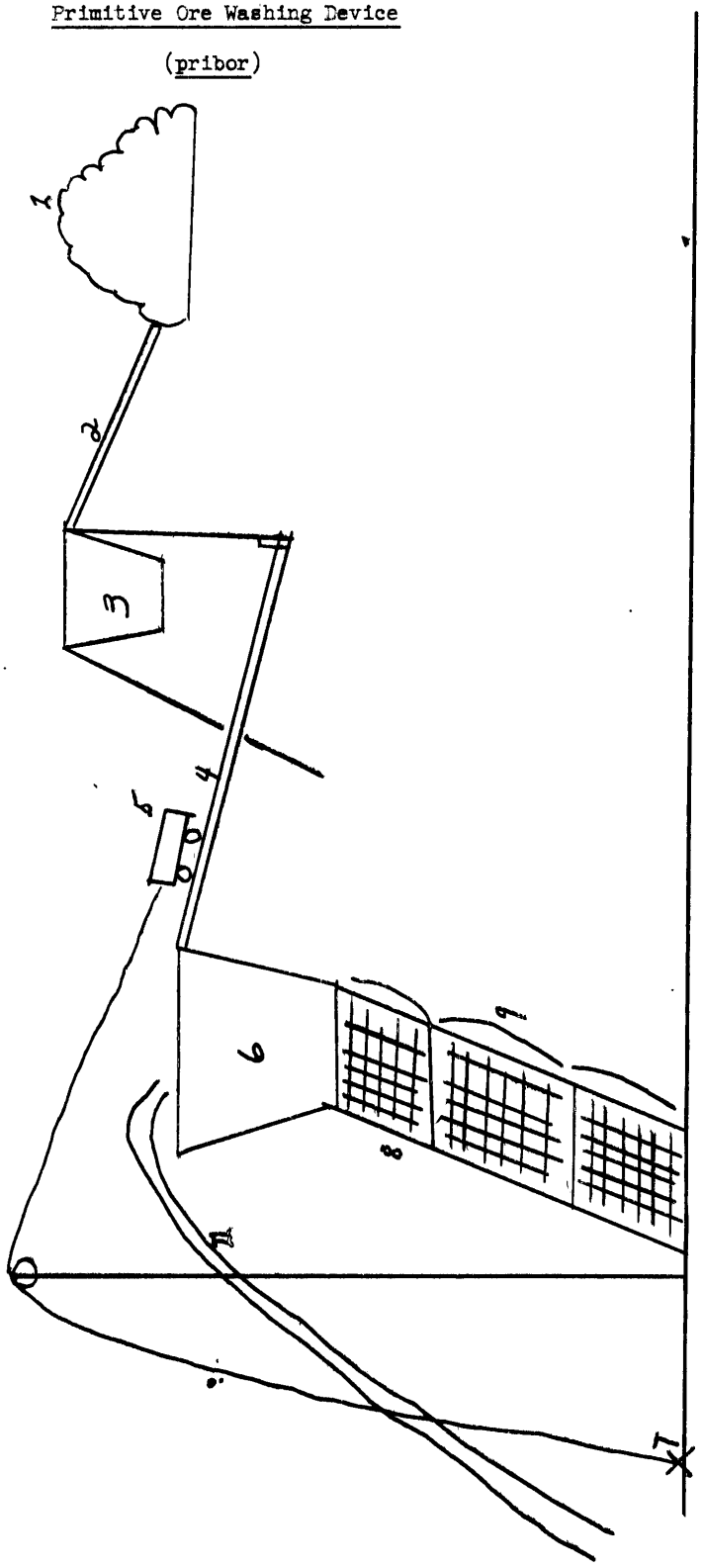
3. [redacted] Comment: Possibly the drills also appeared in 1949. 25X1

[redacted] 25X1

25X1

Primitive Ore Washing Device

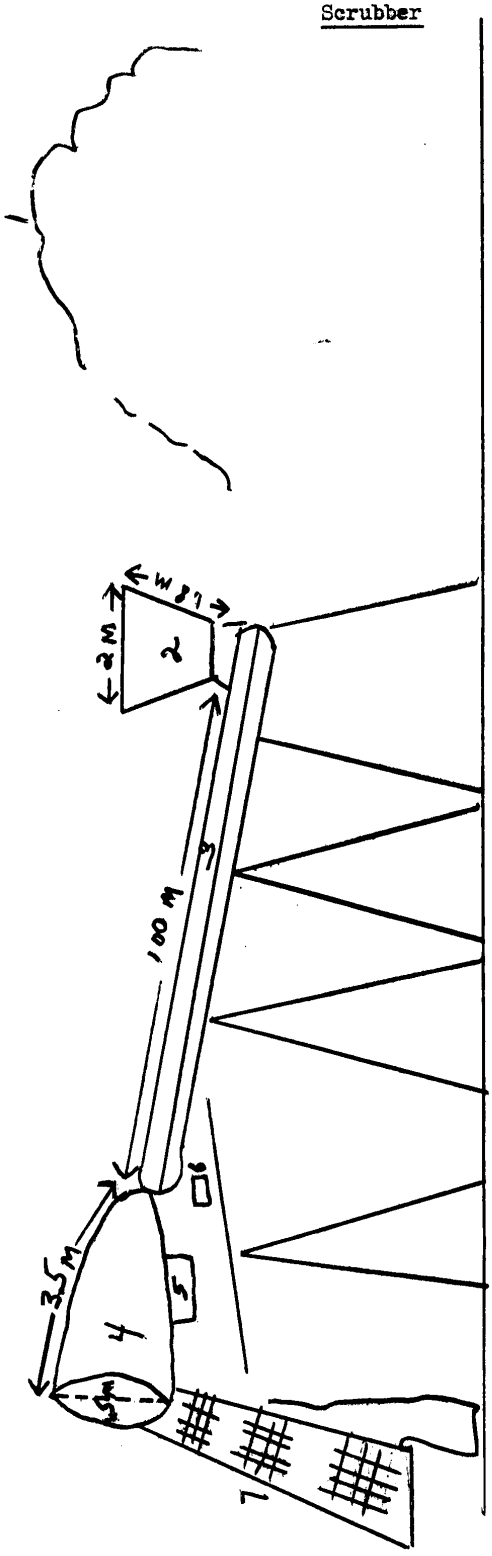
(pribor)



1. Dump of ore.
2. Boards over which wheelbarrows were pushed.
3. Bunker.
4. Rail. Length varied between 45 to 60 m.
5. Mine car. Capacity about 16 cu m.
6. Ore washing tank.
7. Electric windlass to pull lorry.
8. Draining tables with sieves.
9. Cloth bags.
10. Hook for stirring mixture in tank.
11. Water hose.

25X1

Scrubber



Legend

1. Dump of ore.
2. Reception tank, about 2 x 1.8 m.
3. Continuous conveyer belt, about 200 m long.
4. Scrubber,
5. Motor for operating scrubber.
6. Motor for operating conveyer.
7. Drainage table.